

NAME: Morimoto Gunichi DATE OF BIRTH: 1897 PLACE OF BIRTH: Hiroshima
Age: 80 Sex: M Marital Status: M Education: Grammar school 6yrs.

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1910 Age: 73 M.S. YSY Port of entry: Seattle
Occupation/s: 1. Schoolboy 2. Laborer, cook 3. Orchard manager, farmer
Place of residence: 1. Woodland 2. Newcastle 3. Auburn
Religious affiliation: Buddhist church
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Lincoln
Name of relocation center: Tule Lake
Dispensation of property: Left with fruit company Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. Cook 2. Bookkeeper
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: Amache, Colorado

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: /Oct. '45
Address/es: 1. Auburn 2. _____
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Buddhist church
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: Takarabe Date: 12/2/77 Place: Auburn

Translator: unlisted

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Hiroshima Prefecture as the first son of a poor farmer. My father had been in Hawaii as an immigrant to grow sugar beets. After he went back to Japan he married my mother and I was born as their first son.

Q: When did your father go to Hawaii?

A: It was before I was born in 1897, so I think it was around 1895 or before. In those days the contract of immigrants was 3 years, so after 3 years was up he went back to Japan and married my mother and I was born. As it was a poor farming family, no matter how he tried the living was hard, so before I could sit up he changed his mind and went to Canada. I did not hear how he entered America from there but after a year or two he came to America. I hear that in those days among the immigrants with 3-year contract to grow sugar beets those who were the heirs of their families or those who had to support their parents returned to Japan, and those who did not have much savings came to America.

Q: What kind of a man was your father?

A: My father was an illiterate farmer who just made his living by working. Although he was the oldest son he did not have enough money to become an heir because the family was poor. His mother was a step-mother and had complicated relationship with his surroundings. I think he had no other way but to go abroad to work.

Q: About how much land did he own?

A: He owned a little less than an acre. As it was a hilly countryside we did not produce as much crop as the sunny place.

Q: What did he grow?

A: Mostly rice, and during the winter he grew wheat.

Q: Did your grandmother (father's mother) die?

A: Yes, she did. My father went to Hawaii with his wife, but they were separated there. I hear that in those days young men who immigrated to Hawaii lived together in a big camp where there was no order. When my father went back to Japan alone he remarried and I was born. Father was already 42 years old then. In those days there were no women around his age available in Japan so he married my mother who was 20 years younger. That is why the family was complicated. When father was 42 years old he went to Canada leaving his 21 or 22 year-old wife and his son behind. The life of Japanese farmers during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) was very poor although the rich people and landowners were well-off. Because of long war Japan had to spend money on armaments so the government had to collect tax accordingly. That is why the common people had hard times. I think my father left home because of that. But when he came here he found out that the immigrants, especially the Asian immigrants met with strong rejection. In those days most Japanese immigrants who went overseas to work were poor and did not have education, but when they came to America they did not have time to learn English.

Q: About how many years did you live with your father?

A: When my father's brother who was in Hawaii on sugar beets contract went back to Japan and married, my father left home and went to Canada. From Canada he came to America and 5 years later, around 1904 he called my mother. I was 7 years old then. I lived with my uncle and his wife and my grandmother,

As the living was hard my uncle wanted to come to America, but in those days it was hard to come to America as too many immigrants moved from Hawaii to America. Therefore my uncle went to Hawaii as a contract immigrant and from there he came to America. Then his wife, grandmother and I were left behind in Japan. After my mother came to America in 1904 she gave birth to two daughters. In 1910 my grandmother died, and my uncle called his wife to America so I had nowhere to go to. Fortunately I had finished my ^{6 years of} compulsory education so I came to America.

Q: You were brought up by your grandmother, weren't you?

A: Yes, I was brought up mostly by my grandmother. She loved me very much

Q: Was your grandmother a nice person?

A: She was a very nice person. It was the second marriage for both my grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather's first wife died after my father was born, so my father was the step son to to my grandmother. My grandfather's second wife gave birth to a son and two daughters.

Q: Were you ever scolded by your grandmother?

A: Yes, I was, but she loved me very much. She told me old stories and religious stories.

Q: Do you remember what kind of stories she told you?

A: She said, "I hear a time will come when a man can fly, and by that time there will be many people. Also, a time will come when delicious fruit will grow on 3 feet tall trees, but the people will not be able to pick the fruits and eat them." I heard that kind of stories.

Now that I am 80 years old I think about what she told me and wonder how people in her days thought about aeroplanes which they did not have in those days in their village and predicted the hard living condition in the future. When I walked hitting grass by the roadside grandmother used to say, "It is said that a child 7 or 8 years old hate grass by the roadside. I saw you hitting the grass by the roadside as you walked. If you do that you will be cursed by the grass. I was brought up listening to such stories by my grandmother.

Q: You remember anything else your grandmother taught you?

A: She said, "Don't pick all the persimmons from the trees but leave one for the birds to feed on. Even though you grew them yourself they are not all yours." She always warned me not to waste rice as it takes long time to grow them.

Q: You were influenced by your grandmother, weren't you?

A: My father left me before I could sit up and my mother left me when I was 7, so I depended on grandmother until I came to America when I was 13 years old. Since I was 11 or 12 years old I ran errands for the family. I also went out to sell rice and barley.

Q: How did you go about selling them?

A: I put them in a basket and carried the basket on my back. I took them to a store and exchanged them for things we needed such as shoyu and tofu. We did not have to buy vegetables as we grew them.

Q: Do you remember about your mother before she left you when you were 7?

A: As my mother was busy farming outside and grandmother stayed home and took care of the household, I don't remember about mother well. Most children are brought up by their mothers, but I wasn't.

Q: How many years did you go to school?

A: I came here as soon as I finished 6 years of compulsory education.

Q: What do you remember about your schooldays?

A: My schooldays went smoothly. In those days there was no uniform, so I went to school in kimono with other children of the village. The moral science was most important subject in those days. Also the physical education was very strict. When boys become soldiers they cannot dilly-dally, so since we were school kids we were scolded^{by teachers} if we were slow and lazy. We were lucky if we were not beaten.

Q: What subject did you like best in school?

A: I did not have any special subject I liked. As there was no men in my family I had to run errands after I came home from school, so I did not have much time to study. I think my school record was average

Q: What did you enjoy most at school?

A: I enjoyed the excursion and the athletic meet the most.

Q: Were there school trips in those days?

A: I think our excursion was the same as the school trip now.

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Q: The 6th graders go on 2 to 3 days trip nowadays. Did you have that kind of a trip in those days?

A: We made only a one-day trip in those days. We just went to tours for study. We were not in condition to make trips in those days.

Q: What did you play after school?

A: After boys came home from school they were told to go in the wood and gather firewood, or go out and cut the grass or bring in the hay. The girls had to baby-sit. The only time we played with friends were on holidays or at festival time.

I remember the following song: "Don't cry baby when the evening comes

For the fire in the stove will die out.

The meaning of the song is; The mother is cooking supper and the baby is crying. If she tends to the baby, the fire in the stove will die out. It sings about her predicament. In those days there were no gas or electricity to cook with. They burned brushwood in the stove. They did not cook rice, but barley which took 2 to 3 hours to cook. The little child followed mother or grandmother around all day so she is tired and want to go to bed, but mother has to cook supper. If she tends to the child the fire in the stove will die out. This is a song about a farmer's wife's predicament.

Q: Did anything happen in your village such as earthquake or war when you were little?

A: I don't remember anything happening before I was 7 years old.

I remember when I was 7 or 8 years old I visited my neighbor who was wounded in Russo-Japanese War and was in an Army hospital in Hiroshima. On the way home I strayed from my grandmother and cried. We walked about 5 miles to Hiroshima and walked back home.

Q: Were there any horse or ox at your house?

A: As we did not have any men in the family we did not have horse or ox. We had a neighbor bring an ox and help us. We did not use horses in those days. When I ^{became} around 10 years old I was sent out to get grass for the ox after school. Children in those days did not have time to play after school.

Q: What else do you remember about your childhood in Japan?

A: I don't remember much about my childhood.

Q: Were you lonely or were you happy?

A: I did not feel lonely or happy. I had friends in the neighborhood so I was not lonely, but in those days the life was hard for my friends and neighbors so we lived in small way. We did not buy much food, and there were only a few stores that sold food.

Q: Did you have enough to eat when you were little?

A: We had enough to eat, and I went to school with packed lunch.

Q: Did you come to America all alone?

A: I was told to come to America in Spring of 1910. I had just finished 6 years of compulsory education then. In those days we could not come to America if we had eye disease. In Japan in those days we burnt firewood in the house to cook rice and barley and burnt wood in the fireplace to get warm. That is why the house was filled with smoke which was bad for eyes. When I had my eyes examined I was told that I had trachoma, so I failed the examination.

A year before that my grandmother died leaving my uncle's wife and her two daughters and myself behind. Then my uncle summoned his wife, so she left her two children in the care of her relations and came to America. She did not have trachoma, but I did. As I had to have my trachoma cured I stayed in Hiroshima and went to a doctor's office for treatment. When my eyes were almost cured, I caught another eye disease from other patients. As it was taking so long I thought about giving up going to America, but I was told to take my time and get it cured. Finally I came to America in December of 1910. In those days there was no pier in Kobe, so we took a row boat to the ship. It was a small ship about 6,000 ton. In those days I did not know how things were in America as the letters I recieved from America were written in classic Japanese style which I could not read. I was told to go to Seattle as the physical examination at the Immigration office in San Francisco was stricter, so I went to Seattle. It took two weeks to get there.

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Q: How were it on board the ship?

A: The ocean was not too rough, but the air in the ship smelled bad with the smell of disinfectant and food as I was used to living in fresh air. As I was used to eating fresh vegetables and fish, the two weeks on the ship was hard for me.

In those days we could not send a cable telling people to pick me up until the ship came within 300 miles from the shore. That reminds me that when I was in Japan only 3 or 4 houses on the main street in Hiroshima had electricity. Even after I came to America only the main street in Woodland had electricity.

Q: Were you alone on the ship?

A: Yes, I was, but I was with other passengers. In those days the picture marriage had started but only a few people came. It became popular after 1913 or 1914. Most passengers were married people who had wife and children in Japan.

Q: What did you do on board the ship?

A: I stayed in bed most of the time because I didn't have anything to do.

Q: Did you have good appetite?

A: I ate 3 meals a day but just to stay alive as they were not tasty as our home cooked meal. A week before I got on board the ship I had to stay at a temporary residence. During that stay they examined my eyes and passport.

Q: Weren't you lonely?

A: No, I wasn't as I was excited. I was lonely after I came to America as I did not have friends.

Q: Did you make friends on board the ship?

A: I became friend with a young man from Kyushu and two other young men from the same county. The ship left from Kobe, stopped at Yokkaichi and went to Yokohama, where it stayed for 2 days to load the cargo. When
We 3 young men landed at Yokohama and walking down the street we saw a rickshawman say something to a white man. Then this white man said "No" shaking his hand. A man who was about 3 years older than I said "In Yokohama even a rickshawman speaks English."

As I grew up in a family with no men, I had to do a man's job such as selling and buying things. In those days rice was 12 sen, wheat was 8 sen, barley was 6 sen and sake (rice wine) was 24 sen for 1 sho (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ quart). At the age of 13 I already knew how things were.

Q: What kind of country did you think America was before you came here?

A: After I landed at Seattle I stayed at Fujii Hotel. My father had his money robbed, so he borrowed money from a Chinese neighbor and came to meet me. The master of the house where he worked as a gardener told him that he would help my father if he got in trouble, so father was confident. The immigration officer did not say anything to him, but he told the man who came to pick up the passenger who came with me that he would let the man land if he paid him \$50. This man went back home and borrowed \$50 to pay the immigration officer. It was like that in those days.

Q: Did you take a physical examination when you arrived at Seattle?

A: Yes, I had an eye examination and had my passport checked at the Immigration office.

Q: How many days did you stay there?

A: I stayed there for about a week until my father came to pick me up. While I was there, a Japanese man who did something illegal was arrested and was waiting to be sent back to Japan. He explained to us how things were in America. I felt sorry for him, but we were fortunate to have met him.

Q: What did this man do?

A: I don't know what he did as I was still a child. I think he had some relationship with a woman or something.

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Q: Did you know about America when you were in Japan?

A: When I was coming to America there were 3 or 4 people who went back to my village from America. Those people must have been engaged in hard labor in America because they could not live long after they went home. I saw some people who went back to Japan because they became ill.

Q: Then you didn't think America was too good of a place, didn't you?

A: I had an ambition to come to America. I didn't think America was a bad place, but I didn't think it was too good of a place. I heard that it was a civilized country, but what I learned from my teacher and the reality was different.

Q: What was your first impression of Seattle when you arrived there?

A: My first impression was that it was a beautiful place with many green and trees, white houses with red and green roofs. Now I know that it was Victoria Island. The ship stopped at Vancouver and then at Tacoma before it arrived at Seattle to unload the cargo. When I saw Victoria Island I thought America was a beautiful place.

Q: How did you feel when you saw the white people for the first time?
On board the ship

A: A Japanese who was coming back to America said something to a white man, and then asked us to guess this white man's age. All 3 of us could not guess his age. That was the first time I saw a white man. I ate bread for the first time at the Immigration office.

Q: How did it taste like to you?

A: It was light and dry and didn't taste good. I heard that Westerners eat bread, but I had never seen it nor tasted it. At the Immigration office they served us Chinese rice, and it did not taste good either.

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Q: Did your father go to Seattle to meet you?

A: Yes, he did.

Q: How did you feel when you saw your father for the first time?

A: I didn't have any special feeling. I just thought he looks like his brother.

Q: Could you call him "Papa" right away?

A: I could never call him "Papa".

Q: Did you hesitate to do so?

A: Yes, I think so. I was never scolded except once, and I never clinged to him calling him "Papa".

From Seattle we went to San Francisco by a small boat. When we arrived in San Francisco, half of the city ~~was~~ still remained burnt from the Great Earthquake. From San Francisco we came to Woodland. When we arrived there mother welcomed me with tears. As we lived apart I did not have any feeling of dependency on my parents. I listened when they consulted me, but I felt independent. I think we should never send away our children if we did not have to. I had a chance to send my son to his grandmother in Japan, but I did not do that.

Q: What was your father doing at Woodland?

A: He was working as a gardener. At first he did farming but he failed in it so he became a gardener. My mother managed a Japanese bath-house and manufactured tofu. Before 1910 Woodland was the producing district of sugar beets so there were many laborers.

Q: How big was the bathtub?

A: It was big enough for 5 ~~or~~ 6 people to get in at once. I heard that in those days a tier of firewood was about \$3.50, a gardener's labor was \$1.50, tofu was 10¢ and bath fee was 5¢.

Q: What did you do?
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A: I was sent_A to a school for about a year, and after that I worked as a schoolboy.

Q: Where did you do that?

A: In Woodland. When I came to Woodland I was the only Japanese boy there. Before I went there Mr. Iwanaga had a son who was born there and could speak English well. He lived in Yolo. I heard that when he jumped on a train which had started moving he fell and was ran over by the train. If he was alive he could have taught me English, but I was alone, so Mr. Shimizu who was doing domestic work had his master make arrangement to put me in a school. When I first started school I did not even know the alphabet, so it took a long time to learn it. In the meantime, a sugar beets growers boss who lived next door taught me some English grammar for about 3 months. After that I became a schoolboy and worked for nearly 4 years. Finally I was able to get along well.

Q: What kind of mistake did you make as a schoolboy?

A: At one time I turned on the oven but did not light it for a long time so it exploded. I jumped outside then. After that I did not make much mistake.

They say America is a free country and does not discriminate whether people are Negro or Chinese, but when I went to school they made fun of me. After a year or two when I became used to the school I played football. If my side won, the children from the opposing side hit me. What surprised me was there were children older than I in my class. The reason for that is this. In those days there was no compulsory education in America, so migrant laborers did not send their children to school. But when they came to California they started sending their children to school. I was 13 and was in a class with 10-year olds, but there were children around 15 years old. There were only 2 schools in Woodland in those days. as there were not too many children.

Q: About how many Japaese families were there then?

A: I think there were about 20 families, and counting the ones in the country there were about 30 families.

Q: Did you enjoy being a schoolboy?

A: I didn't enjoy it, but the grandmother of the house where I lived taught me the words I didn't know when I went to their place and read books at night. She was a very kind lady.

Miss Maxwell was my first teacher.

Q: The old lady named Mrs. Faulkner was very kind, wasn't she?

A: She was a devout Christian. She gave me 5¢ every Sunday so that I would go to the Congregational Church.

Q: Did you stay there for 3 years?

A: No, I stayed there for 2 years. I forgot what I did after that.

Q: What did you do after schoolboy?

A: I forgot but I think I went to work in the country. Then I came back to town and worked as a cook.

When I went to school my teacher used to tell us that Abraham Lincoln became a president without going to school. We should follow his example and study hard. She also used to say, "This is a public school so anyone can come whether rich or poor. I do not tell you to wear nice clothes to school, but I want you to wear clean clothes that are washed and ironed." She used to wear a long dress with a high collar, and if we were noisy she would strike the desk with a whip. We were very obedient.

In those days the wages were 15¢ an hour and \$1.50 a day. When I first came here I used to go across the street with 5¢ to buy a loaf of bread. A blue shirt was 50¢, shoes were \$2 and a pair of trousers were \$1.50. The wages were low but we could live on it without starving because things were cheap. During the summer vacation I used to go to the country and worked. Mr. Kotoura in Marysville was the first one who gave me work in the country. In the country we worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., 11 hours a day with one hour off for lunch. The outside work was very hard. Many people overworked and became ill. I heard that before I came here the only work for Japanese was chopping wood. In summertime there were some work picking fruits around Vacaville, but in winter time the only work for farmers was chopping wood. which was a hard work. Even my parents chopped wood, They had a 6-feet saw until they went back to Japan.

I was born when my father was 42 years old, so when I came here at the age of 13 my father was 55 years old. At the end of every year my father used to go to Sacramento to buy beans to make tofu, and rice and shoyu for the whole year at Aki Company on 4th Street. One day after I came here I went to Sacramento with my father to do the shopping. On the way back we stopped at a Chinese restaurant on 3rd Street and had dinner for 10¢ a person. As things were so cheap my parents and 3 children could live on making only \$1.50 a day.

Q: Did you go home once in a while while you were a schoolboy?

A: Yes, I went home once in a while and went to the bathhouse.

In those days there was a bookstore named Kaishun-do in Sacramento. As my father ~~did not~~ have education he let me buy books I wanted. When we stopped at Kaishundo to buy my dictionaries a man who went by the store heard my father stutter and said, "That old man had better go back to Japan or ^{soon} he will die in America." When I heard that it stuck me that it was no time for me to go to school. In those days there was no Social Security so ^{if} a man did not have money his friends donated money and sent him back to Japan. Since that time I started working in the country. I was about 16 years old then. I worked in the country during the summer, and in the winter I went back to Woodland and worked ^{as I} ~~cooking~~, cleaning house and washing clothes for about \$35 to \$40 a month. With the money I saved working during the summer I sent my parents back to Japan in 1915. Before that time my mother had a gallstone removed at a hospital in Woodland and stayed there for a week with a special nurse attending. It cost much money so I helped pay the bill. When my parents went back to Japan I paid the passage.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I was 18 years old then. I took them to the 1915 Panama Exposition before they went back to Japan. I spent about \$500 then. I had saved that much money when I was 18 years old.

Q: Did you save that much money by earning \$1.50 a day?

A: By that time the wages were \$2 a day.

Q: Yet \$500 in those days was a lot of money wasn't it?

A: It is worth more than \$5,000 now. I paid the hospital bill, passage and gave them some spending money. My father did not have much money as he had to feed a big family. As father had a house and some land in Japan I thought they could live on it after they go back to Japan. Within two years after they went back to Japan there was inflation and by 1917 the wages became \$4 a day. The life in Japan was not too easy for my parents so I helped them. After my parents went back to Japan I worked hard and saved money, and in 1919 I went back to Japan to see them.

Q: What kind of work did you do till then?

A: I worked as a cook at different homes.

Q: How much did you receive as a cook?

A: I received between \$35 and \$40 a month.

Q: Did you work at restaurants?

A: No, at families. In those days the electricity was only on the main street in Woodland, and other places used gas lamps. They cooked with wood stove and only rich families had gas stoves.

Q: Were those white families?

A: Yes, they were. Japanese homes did not have such thing.

Q: About what time did you get up in the morning?

A: I started working around 7 O'clock as people in the families usually went to work at 8 O'clock.

Q: Did you cook three meals a day?

A: Yes, I did. I had about two hours free time in the afternoon.

I could study during that time, but by the end I was too tired to study

Q: Where did you learn how to cook?

A: There were 3 or 4 Japanese cooks so we exchanged recipes or cooked according to book books.

Q: Did the white masters tell you what to cook?

A: Yes, they did.

Q: What did you do if you didn't know how to cook certain food?

A: In those days the cooking was plain so it was easy. They had feast only on Thanksgiving Day or Christmas, and sometimes they invited guests. I had to do everything including gardening and laundering. It was ^{like} a maid's work.

Q: Did you continue that work till you were 19?

A: I did it till 1919. After I married in 1919 there were no such jobs so we went to the country.

Q: How did you meet your wife?

A: In Japan young men used to visit young girls at home till around 11 O'clock at night. Families with daughters of marrying age allowed young men to visit their daughters.

Q: Did you marry your wife when you went back to Japan at age 21?

A: Yes, I di. I went to visit her with my childhood friend.

Q: Did you know your wife before?

A: No, I didn't, but a matchmaker told me to meet her.

Q: Did you think she was nice when you saw her for the first time?

A: I remained calm and so did she. She had an older sister but as she had bad eyes she could not come to America. I asked the younger sister to marry me if whe wanted to. That was all.

Q: Did your heart go pitapat when you sae her for the first time?

A: No, it did not go pitapat nor I kissed her. Her father wanted her to take a physical examination and if she did not have bad eyes and she was in perfect health he would give his permission for her to marry me. In our days in Japan parents have to approve the marriage.

Q: How old was she then?

A: She was 17 and I was 21.

Q: Did you see each other with a view to arranging engagement?

A: After I saw her for the first time I courted her for about a month.

Q: What kind of thing did you talk about when you visited her?

A: We did not talk anything bad and half jokes. It is not much different from American young people's gathering.

Q: There weren't many places like that in Japan in those days, weren't there?

A: I don't know about other places, but it was like that where I lived.

Q: Did you propose to her directly?

A: No, I didn't.

Q: Why didn't you? Were you bashful?

A: My father's cousin and a neighbor as matchmakers decided we would make a good couple.

Q: Did you think she was pretty when you saw her for the first time?

A: I didn't think she was pretty. I thought she was ^{a little} too young to go to America. She had two grandfathers in America, and so did I. so she was not lonesome.

Q: How did you have your wedding?

A: We exchanged nuptial cups.

Q: Did the families get together for the wedding?

A: Yes, they got together and drank sake. Nowadays they have weddings at shrines or churches, but there was no such custom in our days. After the wedding we visited the shrine.

Q: Did you go on a honeymoon?

A: Coming to America was our honeymoon. As she had never been anywhere

I showed her around. After we came to America she worked hard. The year she came here she went to pick grape and worked in packing sheds. Her parents were worried about her health as she was small and skinny but I didn't think so. She has never been ill in her life.

Q: Weren't you happy when you were married?

A: I was not particularly happy. Japanese have different feeling from Americans.

Q: What kind of idea did you have when you married?

A: In Japan they say that people should marry when there is an opportunity. I thought I should marry while I had the opportunity because if I marry too late it will be hard for me and for my children. I thought I might not be able to marry then, but as the matchmakers made the arrangements I decided to get married.

Q: You were married young compared to other Isseis, weren't you?

A: Yes, I was. Japanese who came from Hawaii and those who were in America before were mostly married in Japan earlier, so they summoned their wives to America. But those who came here as immigrants were mostly single men, and they gambled and drank so they could not save money. Therefore they could not send for a wife, even as a picture bride, so most of them were bachelors.

Q: Were there many people who lost money by gambling?

A: Before the prohibition in 1919 most of business in Sacramento were and bars, restaurants. because when bachelors came back from work they wanted to eat and drink. Since a minister was shot in Stockton in 1922 or 1923 a movement was started to prohibit gambling. Since then the bachelors became straight.

Q: Where did you go first after you came back from Japan?

A: We went to New Castle from the beginning as there were 2 of my wife's uncle were there. They found me a job there. We lived in New Castle for 10 years, and when we had a chance we moved here. We have been living here for 50 years.

Q: What kind of work did you do in New Castle?

A: I worked as a manager of a fruit growers company.

Side 4

Q: When you came here were there any gambling houses?

A: The movement to prohibit gambling started around 1922 or 1923 so there were still some gambling houses here, too.

Q: Were they Japanese gambling places?

A: Yes, they were, so people beat drums trying to make them stop operating those places. There were no big gambling houses around here. Big ones were in Sacramento and in Stockton. I have been in gambling houses once or twice. In Sacramento there are double iron doors and on every section there are Chinese watchman standing. Around the time I first came here there were Chinese barkers trying to call people into the gambling houses. Then Chinese and Japanese came out of nowhere and went into the gambling houses. If they lose they borrow money and drink, if they win, of course they drink. Drinking, gambling and whoring were inseparable in those days. On most every corners of the streets were bars, and in the back room people gambled.

Q: Were there many Isseis who lost money?

A: Not too many Issei made much money, but Mr. Kingo Ushijima of Stockton was a typical farmer.

Q: Did Mr. Ushijima fail in business, too?

A: I don't know well, but I think things did not go well in his late years.

Q: What did you do after you came here?

A: I came here in 1930 and has been living here for 47 years.

Q: Were you a manager of a packing house in New Castle for 10 years?

A: I was a manager of a ^{white} ranch. That was the age of gambling and drinking. People came from Sacramento looking for work so I hired them as they had to make a living.

Q: What did you do during the Depression?

A: I worked a whole year for nothing. I shipped fruits but I did not get the money, so I had to withdraw money from the bank to live on. Before the Depression I was paid \$4 a day, but during the Depression my company asked us to work for \$1 a day or the business would not pay. As they were hard hit by the Depression a few growers company went broke by the Depression.

Q: Were there any people around here who found it difficult to make a living?

A: Everyone was affected but I didn't know of anybody who could not make a living. As we lived in the country we had a house and grew vegetables. We had to pay for the electricity and food, but we

Q: When did you come here from New Castle?

A: We came here in November, 1930.

Q: Were you independent then?

A: Yes, I was. However, as I was born in Japan I could not buy land because of the Alien Land Act, so I bought it in my wife's name as she was born in America.

Q: About how many acres did you buy?

a: I bought 34 acres here.

Q: What did you grow?

A: I was growing plum.

Q: Was the business good?

A: No, it was not too good but I was satisfied as long as I could make a living because I had no intention of going back to Japan. In the meantime children grew up and helped me. It was a family life.

Q: You worked hard since you started farming here, didn't you?

A: Yes, I did. I worked till around midnight before the war.

Q: About what time did you start working in the morning?

A: Not all the year round but we started working around 7 O'clock when we were busy. Still I sent my children to public schools and the Japanese language school. I regret that my oldest son and the daughter could not go to university because of the war. My son could not even attend the graduation exercixe because of the stand-still order.

Q: How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: Because of the news in the papers I thought we might go into war, so I thought it finally started.

Q: Weren't you surprised?

A: Nothing happened around here.

Q: Weren't you afraid you might be persecuted by the white people?

A: No, I was not afraid, but I was cautious and tried not to go out.

The only trouble I had was that I could not draw money from the bank so I could not buy food. I asked Mr. Tsuda who had a business in town to write me a check and bought food with it. About 2 weeks later we could draw money from the bank. The government froze money that belong to Japanese government and big corporations, but not individual's money.

Q: What did you do at the time of evacuation?

A: We assembled at Lincoln and took a train from there to the camp.

Q: What did you do with your property?

A: I left it in the hands of the company I traded with.

Q: What about your land?

A: I let them control the land, too.

Q: Did they take good care of your property?

A: No, not too good, but I couldn't help it. Some people lost their property.

Q: Did you get anything stolen?

A: I had something stolen.

Q: Did you leave your belongings here?

A: Yes, I did. The company which I entrusted the property to had some people live here and take care of my property. But it was more profitable to raise chicken and sheep than to grow fruits, so they did not take care of the trees. I received a lot of damage but I could not help it. because it was war.

Q: Which camp did you go to?

A: We went to Tule Lake. After a year we went to Amache, Colorado.

Q: How did you feel when you entered Tule Lake?

A: We were with friends so I did not think anything about it.

Q: Was it fun?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: How was food in Tule Lake?

A: I was a cook, but it was not too bad considering it was during the war. We could not complain. We could not have been treated that well if it was not America. It is a good country.

Q: What was your opinion on the loyalty problem?

A: In my opinion Japanese were hasty. I think they should have studied the matter carefully and get a sound evidence before they become agitated.

Q: Did you receive a questionnaire on loyalty from the government?

A: Yes, but I did not go to the office the first time. When I received it the second time I went there. I was asked why I did not go there the first time, so I said that I did not come as people around me made so much full that I did not want to come. Then they asked me what I decided to do, so I answered that I would obey the U.S. government as I live in America. I asked them to send me to Colorado because of my bad legs, so they did.

Q: In Tulelake were there rumors such as Japan was winning the war?

A: Yes, but they couldn't help it as they did not know.

Q: Did you play something like go or shogi?

A: No, I did not play anything but I read books.

Q: Did you have any hobby?

A: I did not have any hobby. I just worked.

Q: Do you make Bonsai?

A: Yes, I do.

Q: Did you make Bonsai in the camp?

A: I used to play with little children in the camp. I worked as a cook at Tule Lake, and people were kind to me.

Q: Were there any incident at Tule Lake?
trouble

A: No, there were only little problems among the blocks once in a while and there was no incident in our block.

Q: Was your block made up of people from this vicinity?

A: No, half the poeple were from Marysville and half were from Placerville.

It has been over 30 years since then ~~and~~ I still recieve letters from people who were with me at Tule Lake, but most of the people are gone.

Q: Weren't you surprised when you went to Tule Lake for the first time?

A: I was surprised because it was in the boon docks.

Q: Did you tñink you could live in such a place?

A: I didn't think we could live in such a place.

Q: Did your two sons go to war?

A: No, none of my sons did. My oldest son was summonded, but he was exempted from the service as my health was poor.

Q: You didn't want them to go, didn't you?

A: Of course not as I was farming and my health was poor. I cannot say if it was good or bad. I think it is fate that some people go to war and die and some come home safely after serving. Yet some people get into other business after service. I think this is life, and we cannot help it.

Q: Were you at Tule Lake when Mr. Hitomi was killed?

A: I had already gone to Colorado by then. I think there were some trouble in the camp after we left there.

Q: How was it on the train when you went to Colorado?

A: We spent about two nights on the train.

Q: Did they let you get off of the train?

A: No, we were confined in the train and ate our meals sitting on the seats. As I was a cook I went to the cooking car. When the war started I thought a grave thing has happened, but I did not feel angry. The two countries were knocking each other down for a while before that so I thought something would happen sooner or later.

Q: How was the camp in Colorado?

A: It was not like Tule Lake. It was very peaceful there. People could go outside the camp and make money. I had bad legs so I did not go, but my oldest son went out and worked on sugar beets.

Q: What kind of work did you do in Colorado?

A: I worked as a stoker. It was so cold there that about 3 feet-long icicles hang from the door and could not open it. I did not know that I had to wear special shoes and two pairs of socks. On top of that the circulation of blood was bad so I had frozen feet.

Q: What kind of thing did you play in Colorado?

A: I made toys with children.

Q: Where did you get the lumber to make toys?

A: I think I got them from people outside.

Q: In what way was Colorado better? Was it convenient?

A: It was not too convenient. Granada was near Holly where Hbilly Sugar Company was.

Q: How long did you live in Colorado?

A: A year and a half.

Q: Where did you go after that?

A: I came back here.

Q: What year did you come back here?

A: In October 1945.

Q: How did you feel when Japan lost the war?

A: I was in the hospital with bad feet then.

Q: How did you feel then?

A: I was more worried about my feet, so I didn't care much about the war. Later when we were told to go home I was worried what would become of me without a leg. I learned that a person should not freeze his body.

Q: About how long were you in the hospital?

A: I was hospitalized for 6 months. Dr. Uyemama of Oakland cut my leg first. He did not cut much as I asked him not to, but if it is not cut much it does not bleed and consequently it would not heal.

Q: What kind of disease was it?

A: It was frostbite.

Q: Did you make up your mind to come back here?

A: We were told to leave the camp as it was going to be closed. Some people were excited as they did not have any place to go, but we had

a home although it was a broken down house, wo we were not worried. Some people ^{were going} to Kansas and other places so I told them to go back to where they came from. Then there will be some people you know of and there may be some opportunities. If you go to a stange place it is hard to grab opportunities. I don't know what had become of them. As I could speak English a little I was asked to become a bookkeeper of the block manager. Since I had bad legs I took the job. I also worked as an interpreter for the office.

Q: Did you sell all of your land by then?

A: I had some land left.

Q: Did the ~~com~~^mpany pay you?

A: The company gave me some money, but by the time I paid the tax and utility bills I had only a little money left, so we worked after we came back. and in a couple of years we paid it off. Then the government gave me some compensation, so with that money I built a house in front of this house for my children.

Q: Was your land ill-kept when you came back?

A: Yes, it was so we had to do it all over again. Grape sells as people drink wine, but we do not sell much fruits.

Q: Did someone live in this house while you were evacuated?

A: A Portugese family was living here.

Q: Did they pay the rent?

A: A fruit shipping company was in charge of the house. They hired the Portugese to live here free of rent to take care of the field.